



DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

INFORMATION SERVICE

FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

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Stocks of frozen fish and shellfish, which have been consistently higher this year than in 1943, are still mounting and on October 1 reached the record proportions of 131,617,980 pounds, the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service reported today.

Holdings of fishery products in freezers a month earlier stood at 123,255,209 pounds, at that time the highest figure ever reported. Present holdings are 33,000,000 pounds larger than those of a year ago, which were of approximately average size for this season of the year.

Because of the critical shortage of cold storage space, the Fish and Wildlife Service is cooperating with the War Food Administration in local programs in selected cities to hasten the movement of these stocks into consumption.

The holdings consist of 112,845,050 pounds of salt water fish, 10,919,930 pounds of fresh water species, and 7,853,000 pounds of shellfish. In addition to the fish frozen in the fresh state, are holdings of cured fish comprising 21,630,319 pounds of salted fish and 1,126,242 pounds of smoked fishery products.

Halibut and Atlantic mackerel are the largest single items in the inventory of fish in storage, with holdings of 17,087,000 and 11,852,000 pounds, respectively. These figures show an increase of about 4,000,000 pounds for each species over holdings last October.

Frozen fillets of such New England species as cod, haddock, rosefish, and pollock have now reached a total of approximately 16,000,000 pounds in storage, as against less than 10,000,000 a year ago. This is due in part to the fact that catches by boats operating out of New England ports have increased sharply this year, while distribution facilities have failed to improve to a corresponding degree.

Among fresh water species, twice as much whitefish and pikes (including pickerel, jacks, and yellow jack) is in storage as last year and three times as much lake trout and blue pike; while frozen stocks of lake herring rose from 289,000 pounds last year to 1,511,000 pounds.

A few species stood at about the same level as last year. These were croakers, shad, swordfish, whiting, shrimp, yellow perch, and catfish.

Among the few to show decline were flounders, butterfish, sea herring, and spiny lobster tails.